

FALLS AREA FACTS

- More than 600 species of fossils have been described at the Falls with two-thirds of those being “type specimens” or fossils described for the first time. Over 250 species of corals have been identified.
- In 1778, George Rogers Clark established the first permanent English-speaking settlement in the Northwest Territory on Corn Island. Later he lived on the Indiana shore and founded Clarksville, Indiana. His homesite, below the Falls, is now part of the State Park. The cabin no longer exists.
- In 1806 Aaron Burr trained troops in Jeffersonville and built ships at Silver Creek for a possible invasion of Mexico.
- William Clark, younger brother of George Rogers Clark, set out from here with Meriwether Lewis on their mission to explore the territory of the Louisiana Purchase.
- “The rumbling sound of the waters as they tumble over the rock-paved rapids, is at all times soothing to the ear.” -John James Audubon . Mr. Audubon made more than 200 sketches of 14 species of birds while living in the Falls area.
- Over 270 species of birds have been recorded at the Falls.
- Mark Twain and Walt Whitman both wrote about the Falls area.
- The primitive paddlefish is but one of the 125 species of fish found at the Falls.
- Hard limestone layers presented an obstacle to navigation for early explorers and settlers. This was the only place between Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (where the Ohio River starts) and New Orleans, Louisiana where boats had dangerous rapids or a low water barricade of rock.

ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

BOAT RAMP — Located at the George Rogers Clark Homesite, the double lane ramp provides year-round launching. An accessible loading ramp is available for wheelchair boaters.

FISHING — Sauger, striped bass, white bass, wall-eye, crappie, catfish, etc. A state fishing license is required. Either an Indiana or Kentucky license is valid at the Falls of the Ohio.

HIKING — 175 acres of fossil beds are available for easy to rugged hiking.

INTERPRETIVE CENTER — Exhibits on the geology, history, and cultural development of the Falls of the Ohio. Auditorium, educational classrooms, wildlife observation area, river observation room, and gift shop. An entrance fee is charged for adults and children. Please call for current operating days and times.

INTERPRETIVE NATURALIST SERVICE — Explore the world of natural resources while enjoying interpretive and recreational programs. Program schedules are available on the website at www.IN.gov/dnr/parklake/interpretiveservices/ or call the Interpretive Center. Inquire at Interpretive Center for family or group tours.

PICNIC AREAS — Tables available. Shelter and grills at Clark home site are available for groups on a first come, first served basis.

THIS IS YOUR PARK

All visitors are expected to observe the following rules which are designed to fulfill the purpose for which state parks were established, namely, to preserve a primitive landscape in its natural condition for the use and enjoyment of the people.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Do not injure or damage any structure, rock, tree, flower, bird or wild animal within the Park. Do NOT gather limbs, brush or trees (either dead or alive) for firewood! It MUST be allowed to remain to rebuild the natural humus.
- Any firearm, BB gun, air gun, CO₂ gun, bow and arrow, or spear gun in possession in a state park must be unloaded or un-nocked and stored in a case or locked within a vehicle except when participating in an activity authorized by written permit.
- Dogs and cats must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet and attended at all times.
- There shall be no vending or advertising without permission of the Department of Natural Resources.
- Camping is not allowed.
- Fires shall be built only in places provided.
- Please comply with the Carry In/Carry Out trash policy in all day use areas.
- Motorists will observe speed limits as posted, and park in designated areas.
- Swimming is not allowed.
- Drinking water should be taken only from pumps, hydrants or fountains provided for that purpose.
- Report lost or found articles to the park office.
- All motorized vehicles must remain on paved roadway. Snowmobiles are prohibited.
- Use of metal detectors prohibited.
- Park closes from 11:00 PM until 7:00 AM, and no one is allowed in the park, except for night fishing.
- Fossil, rock, and mineral collecting is prohibited.
- Fireworks are prohibited.

For a complete list of rules and regulations inquire at park office.

Please lock valuables in trunk so that nothing is visible in your car, in order to prevent break-ins.

CENTRAL RESERVATION SYSTEMS

Reservations for all types of camping, family cabins, and shelters at state parks, reservoirs and forests can be made by going online or use the toll free number.

www.camp.IN.gov
1-866-6campIN
(1-866-622-6746)

Reservations for the Indiana State Park Inns and Inn-operated cabins can be made by going online or use the toll free number.

www.indianainns.com
1-877-lodges1
(1-877-563-4371)

Please carry out all trash you produce in order to keep your park clean and beautiful for others to enjoy!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Write : Falls of the Ohio State Park
201 West Riverside Drive
Clarksville, Indiana 47129
Call: (812) 280-9970

DNR
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
www.IN.gov/dnr

SPECIAL NOTE

Receipts from admission and service charges are used to help defray the operation and maintenance costs of the park. List of fees available in the park office.

The Programs, services, facilities, and activities of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources are available to everyone. DNR prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Department of Natural Resources, Executive Office, 402 W. Washington St., Rm. W256, Indianapolis, IN 46204, (317) 232-4020.

INDIANA

The Falls of the Ohio State Park lies along the north shore of the Ohio River in Clarksville, Indiana. The park contains approximately 116 acres of land but lies within the Falls of the Ohio National Wildlife Conservation Area which includes 1,404 acres of Federally protected land and water.

The park was established in 1990, after several attempts to preserve and protect the area. As the 20th Indiana State Park, The Falls of the Ohio specializes in Interpretation and Education. A 16,000 square foot Interpretive Center provides facilities and exhibits throughout the year.

About 387 million years ago, the area around the Falls of the Ohio was covered by a shallow, tropical sea. Under the sea there thrived vast numbers of corals, sponges, brachiopods, mollusks and echinoderms. Fish were present, but are only rarely found as tiny teeth and scales.

As the corals and other sea inhabitants died, they were buried in layers of limy sediment that caused them to become fossilized.

During the retreat of ice age glaciers, rushing melt-water carved out the Ohio River basin and exposed the Devonian fossil beds, providing a unique view of the ancient coral sea floor, preserved in stone.

This natural stopping place gave rise to the establishment of not only Clarksville, but New Albany and Jeffersonville, Indiana, as well as Portland, Shippingport and Louisville, Kentucky. The Interpretive Center provides a panoramic view of the Louisville skyline.

WHAT ARE THE “FALLS?”

The Falls of the Ohio were nothing like Niagara Falls. There were a series of rapids caused by water flowing over an island of a hard limestone composed of vast numbers of fossils. The first rapids began in front of what is now downtown Louisville and dropped 26 feet over 2 1/2 miles at Sand Island.

When the dam was built in the 1920's, the river's flow was restricted and most of the rapids were covered with water. Today, only remnants of these rapids remain below the McAlpine Dam.